

# Paid Advertising

## ***What is paid advertising?***

Paid advertising, otherwise known as paid media, is the airing of campaign messages—or advertisements—by purchasing space in media outlets, such as television and radio stations, newspapers, magazines, Web sites, and outdoor billboards.

The overall goal of an advertising strategy is to reach your audience and change behavior or attitudes. Here are the principal steps to reach that goal:

1. Surround your target audience with specific and consistent messages (e.g., about the nutrition assistance SNAP can provide to low-income individuals and families).
2. Motivate your audience to get more information, such as by calling a phone number or visiting a Web site.

## ***How does advertising differ from media relations?***

- Advertising is repeating your messages a guaranteed number of times.
- Media relations is outreach. It can entail sending out press releases, media advisories, feature articles, and other information. The goal is to clearly state your case to interest media outlets in using the materials or asking you for more information.
- Messages acquired through media relations outreach are referred to as “earned” and add depth to your paid advertising efforts.

## ***How many times must a person hear/see an advertisement in order to take action?***

According to Roper Starch Worldwide research (2001), it takes:

- 3 to 4 impressions for a person to recognize that a message is an advertisement;
- 7 to 8 impressions for a person to remember the message; and
- 10 to 18 impressions for a person to change his or her attitude/behavior as a result of hearing or seeing an advertisement.

## ***How are paid ads different from public service announcements?***

### **Paid Advertising**

- You pay the media outlet to air advertisements
- You select the best time of day, programs, and outlets to reach your target audience (market research and advertising professionals and media buyers can help)
- Ads have 100 percent guaranteed delivery and greater likelihood of reaching the target audience

### **Public Service Announcements**

- The media outlet airs messages free of charge to benefit target audiences
- Because they are free, you have no control over the time of day or how often messages will run
- It is difficult to gauge success due to irregularity of airing

## ***What are the best media outlets to use to reach low-income individuals and families?***

There are many options when purchasing advertising, including radio, television, print, Internet, and outdoor. A review of your organization's available budget and a community needs assessment are the best ways to identify the best media for advertising.

### **RADIO**

FNS has found radio to be the most cost-effective way to reach low-income populations. Research has shown that low-income individuals use radio more frequently than the general population. Stations can use both produced ads (ads that have already been recorded) or radio readers, which are messages that an announcer can read between songs or weather/traffic updates (less expensive).

### **TELEVISION**

Network and cable television advertising are the most effective ways to reach low-income audiences. Depending on the market and available advertising space, television is often the most expensive advertising medium. However, school and community cable stations may be an option to consider, as they typically charge much less than commercial stations.

### **ETHNIC MEDIA**

Ethnic media outlets, such as radio stations and local newspapers, are available in media markets that have large immigrant populations. These outlets tend to be cost-effective. Readers/listeners trust these more than traditional media outlets. Ethnic television stations and cable networks typically are less expensive than mainstream television, but their availability varies from market to market.

### **PRINT**

Immigrants and seniors often read the local daily newspaper, as well as community daily or weekly newspapers, which are often free. By placing print advertisements in these newspapers, you can better reach low-income people ages 60 and older. These local papers are often willing to print drop-in feature articles free of charge, because they help develop content.

### **OUTDOOR**

This form of advertising includes billboards and transit advertisements. Organizations targeting audiences in urban communities that have public transportation systems may want to consider placing outdoor advertising. Outdoor advertising is helpful in raising awareness, yet it is most effective when coupled with advertising in other media.

### **INTERNET**

While Internet use among low-income working poor and seniors is on the rise, low-income populations are less likely to use the Internet than any other medium. However, many Web sites that accept online advertising offer the opportunity to target by ZIP code. In this way, you can make sure your advertising is seen by people who live in lower-income areas of your media market. Online advertising also provides a built-in evaluation mechanism. You can count click through rates to your Web site from the advertisement.

### ***How do I develop or select advertisements?***

When developing or selecting the advertisement you want to use in your paid outreach, it is critical that the ad:

- Clearly focuses on one single important message. For example, a spot can address the stigma of SNAP, or emphasize that, by using benefits from SNAP, people can purchase healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Includes a call to action—such as calling a 1-800 number. Your ad must motivate your target audience to do something.

For more information about message development, see the [Media Outreach](#) section.

### ***Does FNS have paid advertising spots that I can use?***

No. However, FNS has radio scripts posted at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/radio/default.htm>, which organizations can download and record using their own actors.

If your organization is interested in purchasing its own paid advertising on television or radio stations, in print outlets, online, or on billboards, you will need to develop your own ads.

If you are interested in conducting advertising, consider contacting FNS to obtain guidance on the process of developing and placing advertising.

### ***How do I produce my own radio spot using USDA's existing scripts?***

Organizations can use the existing radio scripts from USDA's Web site. You will need to work with a talent agency and recording studio, which will finalize the spot for use on radio stations.

### ***Does FNS have recorded public service announcements that I can use?***

Yes. FNS has produced radio public service announcements at this link:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/psas.htm>.

These spots cannot be used for paid advertising due to talent restrictions.



### **Tips to Make Your Own Radio Buys**

Partnerships with one or more media outlets can help your organization get the deepest discounts—including additional bonus placements. Establish the partnership by:

- Scheduling an in-person meeting with the station manager, public service coordinator, and/or sales manager to explain the importance of nutrition assistance to the outlet's consumers.
- Prepare and present background information about your organization, your outreach, your target audience, and the public benefit for the media outlet representatives.
- If an in-person meeting cannot be scheduled, prepare a cover letter and mail an information packet to the sales manager and public service director. Be sure to follow up by calling the sales manager or public service director to discuss opportunities.

Ask media outlets what they can provide free of charge as a "bonus" for the amount of money you are paying for space.

More information about forming partnerships is located in [Partnerships](#) section.

# 5 Key Steps To Develop An Advertising Plan

## Step 1 Determine Advertising

What type of paid advertising should you conduct? How much money is available to purchase paid advertising? What are the costs associated with developing, designing, or producing advertisements? For print and outdoor advertising, consider costs to develop, design, and/or print materials. For Web site advertising, consider costs of designing ads. If new radio or television scripts are needed, consider costs for script development, production, and talent. Don't forget that State agencies can receive reimbursement from FNS for approximately 50 percent of their administrative costs for outreach to low-income people. For more information, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach/guidance/stateplan.htm>



### 5 Key Steps To Develop An Advertising Plan

1. Determine Advertising
2. Identify Target Audience
3. Identify Target Area
4. Find a Partner Organization
5. Determine Outlets

## Step 2 Identify Target Audience

Conduct research in your State or local area to determine which low-income people have not taken advantage of nutrition assistance. Seniors? Working families? Legal immigrants? Conduct a community needs assessment to determine to whom you should reach out.

## Step 3 Identify Target Area

Consider advertising in one community or “media market,” one State, or multiple States, depending on your capacity. Review the FNS participation rates and demographic data at the Federal and State levels to determine where your target audience resides. Conduct a community needs assessment as described in [Media Outreach](#) section. For more information, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/researchers/default.htm>

## Step 4 Find a Partner Organization

Find other organizations at the State or local level with whom you can partner, including another nonprofit organization or for-profit corporation with which you can pool funds. Also consider a local media outlet that could give you free or discounted advertising space. For more information about partnerships, see the [Partnerships](#) section.

## Step 5 Determine Outlets

Finally, identify the top media outlets that your target audience uses. Remember, if you have a limited media buying budget, aim for lower-cost advertising options, such as radio and ethnic media. The most effective media plan is one that not only gets your message to your target audience, but gets it there with sufficient repetition.

## ***How should I time my advertisements?***

### **During The Year**

To increase the chance that your target audience will recognize, remember, and act on your messages, plan your advertising in conjunction with other outreach activities that are taking place. It is also a good idea to plan as far ahead as possible to negotiate the best rates with media outlets. In past years, FNS has aired radio advertisements in January and February, to coincide with cold-weather months and increased heating costs; and in mid-to-late spring, when parents begin worrying about feeding school-age children who qualify for free or reduced-price meals. However, there are certain times of the year that are more costly:

- The fall, during an election year, when candidates air lots of advertising. The amount of available space is limited and therefore more expensive.
- Winter holidays—from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. The amount of available space is limited because of holiday advertising by businesses.
- Sweep periods during May and November. Networks typically schedule their best programs and run never-before-seen episodes of popular shows, which bring in more viewers.

### **During The Day**

If you decide to purchase television and radio advertising, work with your media buying professional, media planner, or the stations to determine the best time of day to air the advertising. Ask outlets to provide research—in the form of data (not written analysis)—on the best times to reach the selected target audience and compare this information across stations.

## ***Whom can I contact to find a local advertising agency?***

Consult with your partners or contact your Chamber of Commerce to find a local advertising agency that can help.

## ***What are some tips to negotiate and place advertising and to form partnerships?***

A paid media plan requires extensive research and in-depth analysis of market conditions and unique viewing habits of each market. Depending on the size of your budget and the complexity of your outreach plan, you should consider hiring a media buying professional to place paid advertising. A media professional will:

- Tailor buys for various media markets within a State or throughout a region;
- Weigh markets based on the number of eligible nonparticipants; and
- Negotiate rates—discounted, free, and/or matching spots—to leverage the buy.

However, if your organization has limited funds, you may decide to place your own media buy.

# Monitoring The Effectiveness of Advertising

## ***How can I monitor the placements?***

After placing a paid media buy, it is important to confirm that outlets aired your messages. Here are some tips to aid you in monitoring the placements:

### **Radio and Television Advertising**

Request reports and invoices on how often and when the advertisements were played, and carefully review them to ensure the advertisements were placed according to the planned schedule.

### **Print Advertising**

Request “tear sheets” or copies of the ad that ran in the publication. Your organization should obtain this information from every publication in which print ads were placed.

### **Online Banner Ads**

Make sure to work with the designer of both banner ads and the Web site so that click-through rates and impressions are monitored from the advertising.

### **Outdoor Billboards and Transit Ads**

Request a proof of performance after the campaign is over, which includes pictures and details about the campaign.

## ***What should I do if my organization does not get the number of spots paid for or if the print outlet doesn't run the advertisement?***

If in the course of monitoring your buy you learn that a radio or television station did not deliver the negotiated number of spots, or if a print outlet forgets to run an advertisement on a specific date, you should contact the outlet and ask it to “make good” on the original advertisement by running another in its place for no additional cost.

## ***How can I measure effectiveness of advertising?***

FNS has used a 1-800 number as its call to action in its SNAP National Media Campaign. In fact, FNS encourages partners to advertise a phone number rather than a Web site, as many low-income individuals and families do not use computers or have access to them.

To determine how effective paid advertising has been, organizations should compare the number of phone calls during advertising flights to the number of calls made during the same period in a previous year when no advertising ran. By doing so, organizations can determine how well the advertising has reached the target audience and revise future media plans accordingly.

# Glossary Of Terms

<b>Terms</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Advertising</b>	The airing of campaign messages, or advertisements, by purchasing space in media outlets.
<b>Bonus/Value-Add</b>	Additional air time or “free” placements that a media outlet will give an organization as a result of negotiation on the paid advertising.
<b>Click-Through</b>	The process of clicking on an online advertisement, which then takes you through to the advertiser’s destination, usually a Web site or landing page.
<b>Click-Through Rate (CTR)</b>	The average number of click-throughs per hundred ad impressions, expressed as a percentage.
<b>Cost Per Point (CPP)</b>	The cost to reach 1 percent (or one rating point) of the individuals in a specific market. The cost per point varies by market size, demand, and advertising content. Cost Per Point = Schedule Cost / Number of Gross Rating Points
<b>Day Part</b>	The time of day when a television or radio ad airs. <div> <div> <b>Television</b>  EM: Early Morning 5 a.m.–9 a.m.  DT: Daytime 9 a.m.–3 p.m.  EF: Early Fringe 3 p.m.–5 p.m.  EN: Early News 5 p.m.–7 p.m. </div> <div> PA: Prime Access 7 p.m.–8 p.m.  PT: Primetime 8 p.m.–11 p.m.  LN: Late News 11 p.m.–11:30 p.m.  LF: Late Fringe 11:30 p.m.–2 a.m. </div> <div> <b>Radio</b>  AM Drive: 5 a.m.–10 a.m.  Midday: 10 a.m.–3 p.m.  PM Drive: 3 p.m.–7 p.m.  Evenings: 7 p.m.–12 a.m. </div> </div>
<b>Designated Media Market (DMA)</b>	The Nielsen-designated geographic area that is covered by market-specific television stations. Currently there are 210 markets.
<b>“Earned” or “Free” Media</b>	Exposure obtained from a medium as a result of your publicity and lobbying.
<b>Flight Date</b>	The start and end dates of your advertising schedule. Typically, television and radio are purchased on a weekly basis.
<b>Frequency</b>	The potential number of times individuals are exposed to an advertising schedule over a given period of time.
<b>Impressions</b>	(Typically used with online advertising.) The number of times your ad will be seen over the course of the campaign (number of times displayed X number of viewers). If you purchase 500,000 impressions, the ad will be seen 500,000 times over the course of the advertising period.
<b>Gross Rating Points (GRP)</b>	The sum of all ratings. The total ratings of all programs purchased during a given period of time, which come in multiples of 100 (e.g., 100, 500, 1,000). For example, if an organization purchases advertising at 600 GRPs, the average viewer will see the ad 6 times. Gross Rating Points vary by market size and viewing habits, demographic data (such as age and gender), and timing.
<b>Matching Spots</b>	During negotiations, outlets frequently offer discounts in the form of free placements. For example, for every two spots an organization purchases, the media outlet may offer to air, or match, one spot for free.
<b>Proof</b>	A hard copy of a print ad that you review to be sure that the text is correct and the layout and colors are consistent with the electronic version of the print advertisement.
<b>Public Service Announcement (PSA)</b>	A public service message that a media outlet airs free of charge as part of its community service mission. The messages provide information that could significantly affect people’s lives in a positive way.
<b>Ratings</b>	The percentage of individuals or audience watching a program in a particular market. For example, a 15-rating = 15 percent of the audience. Ratings vary depending on the age and gender that are being measured.
<b>Reach</b>	The percentage of different individuals exposed to a media schedule during a given period of time.
<b>Sweep Period</b>	Referring to television networks, the months of November and May. Viewer ratings are compiled then, so these are times when networks typically schedule their best programs and run never-before-seen episodes of popular shows, which bring in more viewers.
<b>Tear Sheet</b>	A copy of the ad that ran in the publication, from every publication in which print ads are placed.
<b>Traffic</b>	Rotation of spots during a specific media flight.